

A
SERMON

Preached at the ^{4475. K. 1}
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CATHEDRAL CHURCH

OF
St. CANICE
KILKENNY.

Feb. 27. 1669:

BY
JOSEPH TEATE,
Dean of St. CAN. KILKENNY.

DUBLIN,
Printed by Benjamin Tooke, Printer to the Kings
Most Excellent Majesty, and are to be sold by
Mary Crooke, in Castle-street. 1670.



OF

Imprimatur,

P. M. Archiepiscopo
Dubliniensis à Sac:
Domest.

July 19. 1670.



DUBLIN

Printed by Benjamin Tooke, Printer to the Bishop.
Most Excellent Majesty, and are to be sold by
Any Bookseller in Dublin.



To the Right Honourable Lady,

EMILIA,

Countess of

OSSORY.

MADAM,



He Divine Law that constitutes Tribute the due of Princes, hath consigned Honour the due of Nobles: which by the Learned is distinguished into *Civil*, which is a Descent from worthy Ancestors: *Moral*, whose Spring

is

The Epistle

is *Virtue*: and *Christian*, which consists in a *New Birth*, whereby we are Co-heirs with *Christ*, and the Off-spring of *God*.

Madam, I judge my self as insufficient, as *Envy* can do impertinent, to think by *Elogies* of your *Merit*, to add *Lustre* to your *Name*; your *Ladiship* stands upon such a *Theatre*, that every *Scene* of your life is exposed to *Publique View*, and therefore if I should give flattering *Titles*, the *Suffrage* of men would soon condemn me; but where *God* hath made me a *Debtor*, it is but just to make *Payment* in conscience to the highest *Sanction*, and Sence of my own *Obligation* of *Gratitude*. How your *Ladiship* is enobled by *Birth*, I shall relate in the words of the *Learned Vossius*, who in his *Book* of the three *Creeds*, Dedicated to *William Prince of Aurange*, tells us, that his *Descent* was from *Adolphus* of *Nassau* *Cesar* in the twelfth Century, so that
Ma-

Dedicatory.

Madam, by your Bloud, and Allyes,
you are a Branch circling from an Imperial Stem of Majesty.

But Madam, the Nobility of your Descent, onely enrolls your Name in the Catalogue of the Great, is Secular and Transitory, Calculated for this World; but it is your Grace and Virtue that writes it in the Book of Life, and Embalms it to Immortality; the Wreaths of civil Honour are withering, Grandeur is fugitive, but Godliness is a Crown that fadeth not away: which consists in a great Humility, constant Devotion, and a diffusive Charity, which were the Amabilities of your Ladyships Conversation among us; so that you have left behind you a Good Name, and carried with you a good Conscience.

To digest just praises, is a tender, and discreet Virtue, that therefore you may give the Glory to God, I shall turn a Pa-

The Epistle Dedicatory.

negyrick into a Prayer, That your Soul may be precious in the sight of God, as the Apple of his Eye, the Signet on his Right hand, and be made up among his Jewells, That the Losses of your greatest temporal Blessings may be borne with Patience, and what God hath spared, may be enjoyed with Moderation; that your mind may be equal, and fixed in the great Accidents, and Vicissitudes of humane Life, that the Kingdom of *Ireland* may prove to your Ladiship a Fortunate Island, by becoming what it once was called, an Island of Saints.

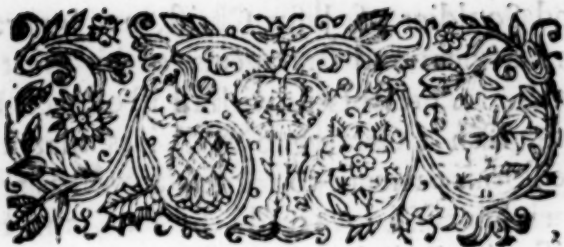
This Sermon had been sooner made publick, but that it was retarded by a tedious sickness; when it was preached, it was consecrated to God, and now its printed, its dedicated to your Ladiship, by the obedience of,

Madame V

Your Ladiships most humble Servant

JOSEPH TEATE.

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2 TIM 3. 5.

*Having a form of Godliness, but denying
the power thereof.*

Saint Paul who was not a whit behind the
chiefest Apostles in Languages, Labours,
Gifts of healing, Visions, Extasies, and
Prophetick Inspirations, foretells us, what
monstrous impieties the Womb of time should
travell with under the dispensation of the
Gospel; He foresaw the wickedness of men
flying on, as fast as the wings of time could car-
ry it: That as the Dew of Heaven, and
Showre of Divine blessings should descend in
plenty and abundance, so the Inundation of
iniquity should rise higher to deluge and over-
flow the world, that times should be as perillous,
as sins were exceeding sinfull: Therefore as

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a good Souldier of Jesus Christ, not ignorant of the devices and stratagems of his spiritual enemies, he presents us with a List of their Legions; such a Catalogue of Vices that may exercise our patience to recite, as well as resist them: where selfe love leads the Van, and Hypocrisie in Religion brings up the Rear; And prefixeth this Asterisk *ἀστέρις* do thou turn Gnostick in this, Son *Timothy*, and know that *the last dayes shall be evil, for men shall be Traytors, Truce-breakers, Heady, High-minded, Lovers of pleasures, more then Lovers of God, having a form, but denying the power of Godliness.* The Ages subsequent to the Apostle have given a completion to his Prophecie, that no Fraud is so insinuating as that which is pious, no Error so infectious as that which is formal, when the Devil tells Lyes in Hypocrisie from under the Mantle of a Prophet, they are credited as the Oracles of God, and men think they entertain Celestial Immissions, when he suggesteth things that seem to favour of piety as an Angel of light. *Valentinus* preach'd zealously, *Arius* repented publicly, *Pelagius* lived piously; yet they were a Triumvirate of the most pernicious Hereticks that
ever

ever troubled the Church, when a man of Parts, and Eloquence, who designs Schism in the Church, and seditious in the State comes up into the Pulpit with a glorious Profession, magnifies his industry in the conversion of Souls, and seems himself to be in an Agony, when he talks of our Saviour; his mortified countenance enlivens his Projects, his Person is had in admiration, his Discourses received with credulity, as the Babilonians entertain'd *Zopyrus*, who by shewing them his mangled members made himself Master of their Affections, and soon after *Darius* Lord of their City.

So sad is the Truth, that as the most poysonous pills may be gilded, so the vilest impieties may be garnished with a shew of Religion: as may appear from those the *Apostle* mentions *verse 2. Covetous, Boasters, Proud, Blasphemers* &c. A man may be Covetous in his charity, *Judas* may aske why the Oyntment was not sold and given to the poor, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a Thief, a man may be a Boaster in his self-denial, with the Philosopher write a Treatise against Vain-glory, and subscribe to it with his own Name; Proud in his humility, like *Diotrophes* preach

the Gospel and affect Preheminence, or *Diogenes* revile the Grandure of Princes with greater insolence, a Blasphemer in his prayers crying as the *Pharisee*, *God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are*, and for all that be worse, and take his name in vain: There hath not been an irreverend Person in the Assembly, a disloyal Person to Authority, a schismatical Seperatist from the Church: no, not the Murder of Gods Prophets, and Gods Anoynted, nor any sacrilegious Alienation of their Estates, and Maintenance, nor the Blasphemies of Quakers, Ranters, and Familists, but have been ushered in with the hideous out-cries of Repentance and Reformation: there is not a sinner in the Catalogue, but may have the *form of Godliness*, and deny the power thereof.

The terms of the proposition to be explained are four: *Godliness*, *the Form of Godliness*, *the Power*, *the Denying the power under the Form of it*.

Godliness, if we consult the Etymon, the *Hellenists* will tell us, is derived from a verb that signifies to worship, and imports that solemn Reverence a Creature oweth his Maker, and that in the dayes of *Moses* he was called a
 Godly

Godly person, that was a Profelyte of the Gate, acknowledged and ador'd a Deity, observed the seven precepts of the sons of *Noah*, with *Cornelius*, and the *Ethiopian* Eunuch. But the Essence of it consists in the Latitude of Holiness, the Rectitude and Conformity of the heart, and life to the first and second Tables of the Law; Godliness is profitable to all things, that is obedience to that Law that is holy in its Precept, just in its Penalties, and good in its Rewards. Yet in other places of these Epistles to *Timothy*, it is to be understood in a more limited sense, sometimes for the Systeme of fundamental truths, call'd the Doctrine according to Godliness, the Symbol of which the Apostle gives us, when he saith, *Great is the mystery of Godliness. God manifested in the Flesh*, &c. Sometimes for the Duties of Religion, distinct from the Moralities of honest men, so we are exhorted to *live peaceable, and quiet lives in Godliness, and honesty*, but here being opposed to a *Form*, an External Pomp and Pageantry, it is the inward Purity and Devotion of the heart, whereby God is worshipped in Spirit without Carnality, and in Truth without Hypocrisy.

The form of Godliness, is its Scheme; and

external Similitude, a Fashion, and resemblance, or appearance of that which is not real and intrinsical. As *Jupiter* among the Poets was metamorphosed into the shape of a Beast, though he pretended to be a Deity; so these men would pretend to be Deities, when they are but Beasts; the word beings ^{μὴ οὐκ} not ^{τὴν} the Essential *Form* cannot be here intended, which is so far from the denial of Godliness, that it gives it Difference and Operation, as the Reasonable Soul is the form of a man, whereby he discourseth, and is distinguished from all other Ranks of Beings, so the Image of God is the *Form of Godliness* that gives it Power, and Distinction from all things that are not homogenial to it. But that form which consists in a Cumulation of accidents, and is the more Vain and void, as the Text is excellent, on which it is a Gloss, and Paraphrase: so *Esau* who was under the Curse of the Creation to bring forth Briars, and Thorns, being an hairy and rough man, in the form and apparel of *Jacob*, seem'd a Paradise, and smelled like a Field which the Lord had blessed: so a common person in a Comedy may represent the Majesty of a Monarch. But then these Forms are like the Ideas
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of *Plato*, wholly abstracted from matter, and destitute of the *power of Godliness*.

This power of Godliness is, when the Habits of Grace send forth the vigorous and vital Actings of holyness, as the Fountain doth Streams, and the Sun Rayes and Emanations of light, as will appeare in the sequel of this discourse.

Men deny the *power* under the *form* of *Godliness* when they seem to be Pious, because they are Politick, and profess themselves Christians because Subjects to a King that is the Defender of the Faith; yet think, that the exquisite Holiness of the Law, is but the Severity of Melancholick Men, who have represented Christ to be an hard Master, and therefore although they invoke his Name are disloyal to his Commands, profess they know God, but in works Deny him; ingeminate an oral Loyalty, crying *Lord, Lord, but do not his will*: and so think to palliat the Atheism of their lives by the Religion of their Language: Thus the Emphasis and Important Terms of the *Proposition* are explained.

We might justly expect, when an Apostle is giving us the Kalander and Ephimerides of the
Times

Times of the *Messias*; that the first Prospect in the Firmament of the Church, would be an Horizon of hope, the dispensation of the Gospel being so bright and blessed, *When the Sun of righteousness did appear with healing in his wings*; yet he presageth nothing, but Clouds, and Darknes, Eclipses of that Light that should shine before many, glaring, and portentous Phenomena's, and the Signes of Heaven without Celestial Influences: *in the last dayes perillous times shall come*, Last dayes they are in regard of the administration, that doth succeed, and exceed that which was Levitical, Christ being a better Prince then *Moses* in his Sanctions, a better Priest then *Aaron* in his Sacrifice, he was not onely an High Priest, but an Apostle, that was sent out of the Bosome of the Father, to bring glad tydings, yet when the Plenty of Grace was most of all dispersed, the *Power of Godliness* was most despised, so that men were effterated by clemency, enraged by meekness, impatient by forbearance, wax wanion in the most goodly Heritage; and live as if *Christ* were an hard Master in the Largesse of his Bounty. *For in the last dayes, men shall be Lovers of themselves, having a form of God-*
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liness, but denying the power thereof So that first the *Form*, and then the *Power*, are the Arguments of my present Discourse.

A *Form* may be considered as a Virgin, or a Prostitute, as abstracted from, or concomitant upon the powers of Religion, as *Diana* was in Heaven a star, but in Hell a firebrand, and Consort of *Pluto*; so a *form* flowing from the power of *Godliness*, is Angelical, but divested from it, Diabolical.

For when our Works of Darknes appear as Angels of Light, we mock God, by honouring him with our Lips, and dethroning him from our Hearts, we crucifie the Lord of Glory; and, as the Souldiers, put a Crown on his Head, and Robes on his body, and salute him with an Irony, *Hail King of the Jews*; we worship the true God, as if he were an Idol, that had eyes, and saw not, not considering his great Attribute of searching the heart; we make God abhor his own Institutions, and reverse his Laws, *bring no more vain Oblations, incense is an abomination to me*, as if he would receive no Honour from the Services of Hypocrites, but what he distrains for by his publick Judgements; Thus a *form* is a desperate Incentive to, and a plausible

gine of the greatest Villanies; *Cain* first Sacrificed to his God, and then slaughtered his Brother; *Jezabel* institutes a Fast, and then thirsts for the Blood of *Naboth*. The *strange Woman* paid her vows with Peace-offerings in her hands, and then managed the Artifices of an Adulteress, and entred into Obscene Dialogues of defiling her husbands Bed. The Jews consecrated Gifts to the Treasury of the Temple, and then cryed, *the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are we*, but the *Corban* turned *Bethel* the House of God, into *Betharven* an House of Affliction, to their indigent, and unrelieved Parents. Thus a Formalist makes the Rites of Religion, a Gloss for sin, solicits wickedness in the external glorifications of God, and is like those sort of Meteors, that shine onely in their fall from heaven.

But a *Form*, in conjunction with the *Power*, is an Ornament of great Price in the sight of God; *St. Paul* doth not discourage a form, that is modest in Complexion, grave in Gesture, discreet in the Expressions of it self; that waits on the *Power of Godliness*, as a Disciple on his Master, or a Servant on his Lord; as he saith in the first Epistle, *Good works become women, profess*

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sing Godliness; Religion is not to be like those *mineral mountains* that appear barren, when the *Veins of Gold* lodge in their *Bowells*, but as the *Kings daughter*, *all glorious within*, yet her *Rayment is of wrought Gold*. Can a *Maid* forget her ornaments? or a *Bride* her attire? or the *Spouse* of *Christ* her *Rayment of Needle-work*? as *David* invited all his faculties within him, so his *Glory*, his *Tongue*, to joyn in the *Chorus*, as the most natural, proper, and musical *Instrument*, whereby an heart, Big with the *Burden* in the songs of *Praise*, could best deliver it self; *our Lights are so to shine before men*, that they seeing our good works, may glorifie our *Father which is in heaven*.

The corruption of this *form*, is either *Gross*, and *Pharisaical*, when men are *Zealots* for the first *Table*, for the *Temple*, and *Invocation*, for *Sacrifices* and *Altars*, for *Incense*, and *Oblation*, *Sabbaths*, and *solemn Feasts*; but break in pieces the second, neither sparing their neighbours *Wives* in *Lust*, nor their *Lives* in their *Anger*, nor their *Estates* in their *Avarice*, nor their *Good Names* in their *Ambition*; as if the two *Tables* were as the two *Principles*, and *Gods* of the *Manichees*, the one *Good*, and the other

Evil; the first Table a Sacred Edict, a Royal Promulgation to be kept, the second to be violated as a Snare, and Tyrannical Exaction.

The other corruption is Subtile and Moral, when a *Form of Godliness*, and Honesty do meet together and Kiss each other; A man may be born in the Pale of the Church, baptized into the most holy faith, instructed in her Catechismes, and Homilies, And only be a Patriot of Virtue in the profession of Faith: he may stand up at the recitation of the Creed, and say Amen to every Article, and yet be just in his actions, temperate in his life, generous in his spirit, upon no other principles then *Socrates* or *Seneca* might be, his Religious Duties are all Moralities, he reads the scripture and entertains them with an humane Faith, as the stories of *Zenophon*, or *Plutarch*, he gives to the Poor and calls it Charity, when his Almshouses are the Issues of a natural Compassion, and Benignity, what he doth is from the Dictates of Reason, which are perfective of the humane nature, not from an assent to a divine Revelation, or Obedience to the will of God: Now Virtue in a Profession of Godliness is the highest semblance of Grace, I cannot perswade myself that the light

of nature that convinceth Atheism, and contemplates on the Omnipotence and Wisdom of God is an *ignis fatuus*; or that the Law of Nature that God hath written in the Sacred Scriptures, as well as the hearts of all men is a Throne of Iniquity, or that Honesty, Temperance, Chastity and Justice are glittering sins, but rather believe that they are Rudiments of our Creation, not wholly Obliterated by the fall of man though they do not please God in that way of Complacency that faith doth; they may be Strictures, and darker Shaddowes, though Oraces are the Bright and Orient Colours in that Soul that is created after Gods image: To apply all this, if a man professeth himself a Christian, and is only Chast as a Brave *Romane*, out of Glory, or a Mind cultivated by Reason, none can resolve the Sophism, and say that his Virtue doth not flow from the influences of faith, but the infallibility of Heaven, and his own Conscience. *The Formes of Godliness* being then skilfull to deceive, I shall absolve my discourse in two particulars. First in shewing Reasons why *Godliness* will express it self in a *Form*, then Rules to direct the *Form* by the *Power*.

Rea-

Reasons why *Godliness* hath a *Form* :

The nature of Graces is to be active in the Discovery of it self; The Spirit of God is no where more Rhetorical then in the Variety of Metaphors on this Subject, He calls it a *Light that must shine before men*, that may as easily be suppressed in its Heat, as conceal'd in its Brightness; He compares it to the vital moysture of *a Tree planted by the Rivers of water, that sendeth forth its Blossoms and Fruits in due season*; to *Leaven*, whose Fermentation continues till it hath *Leavened the whole Lump*: to *perfumed Garments*; the *smell of Lebanon*; and the *Powders of the Merchants*; such an Impulse there is in Grace to display its own Glory; So it was with *St. Paul* who was to beare the name of Christ before Kings, saith he, *I beleived, therefore have I spoken. and in St. Peter* who bare the name of Christ before the *Sanedrim*; *we cannot but speake the things we have seen, and heard.* when *David* mused, the Fire burned, but it flamed forth when he spake, out of the Abundance of his heart; with the *heart* a man beleived

leiveth unto *Righteousness*, and with the *tongue Confession* is made unto *Salvation*.

The sense of those great Priviledges, and divine Relations we have by Godliness excites us to it, if we are a chosen Generation, a Royal Priest-hood, a Holy Nation, and Peculiar People; it is to shew forth the Praises of him that called us; so *David* that was a chosen Prince, a Royal Prophet, a Peculiar Person did; *Come and heare all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done for my Soul*; it is not proper for that Soul that is Loud in begging mercyes, to be Silent, when it receives them: God hath delivered my Darling from the Paw of the Lyon, redeemed me from sin, rescued me from Satan, ransomed me from the Bottomless Pit, and with a greater depth of Love, hath invited me with glorious Liberties, made me a member of his Son, equal to the Angels, an Heir of his Kingdom, and if I am still silent, I must implead his goodness, because it is unutterable, and my own joy that is unspeakable, and full of glory.

It is Gods end in giving Graces, that their intrinsic Worth and Lustre may shine forth, to his own Glory, and the Good of others, we are fil-

filled with the fruits of Righteousness, to the praise, and glory of God; and hereby is the Father glorified, if we bring forth much fruit: Grace loseth that advantage of its Influence, and Exemplarity, when it is a candle put under a bushel, which it hath, when all the Graces shine as a Branch of lights to the whole house: when faith leads a Monastick Life, is an Hermit in Solitudes, and agitates devout meditations in a private Bosome; it is an inclosed Garden in a Wilderness, it gives pleasure to a contemplative Life; but it seems not to work by Love in the feeling of Communion, by casting Beams on the Members of that Body, whose Head is Christ: a *Form* then is acceptable to God, being serviceable to the Communion of Saints, and instrumental to the Honour of his own Name.

God requires the service and subjection of the whole man, the Life and the Language, the Mind, and the Mouth, the Faculties of the Soul, and the Organs of the Body to glorifie God, even the Father of our Lord *Jesus Christ*.

Gratitude to God, and Charity to our Brother, engage us to a *Form of Godliness*; the first makes us speak Honourable things of God, the second thing Necessary for Man; Instruction

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to the ignorant, Reproofe to the vicious, Comfort to the disconsolate, when the Channels of the divine spirit are as open, as the Fountaine is free and Festival ; As the Beneficence of God to the body and soul requireth the integrity of the whole man, who hath created and blessed both ; So he hath created and blessed the Body in that Dependence on, and Communion with the Soul, that while there is Humility in the Heart, it will bend the knee in adoration; where there is desire in the Reines, it will lift up the Hands in uncessant Supplications ; where there is Joy in the Mind, it will open the Mouth to shew forth its praise.

Our Baptismal Vow doth oblige us to confess the Faith of Christ crucified, which in the dayes of Persecution was an eminent act of Fortitude and resolution, Christ crucified was to the *Jewes* a Stumbling Block ; and to the *Greeks* foolishness ; yet *Lactantius* tells us that the Primitive Christians had the signe of the Cross drawn on their Fore-heads in most orient Blood, to perswade Infidels to beleive that they were built upon the Jewish Stumbling stone, and dignified with the Grecian obloquy. The beauty of a *Form* is commended to us by these

Perfwasions; as the Glorious Attire of Godliness; yet this Attire is to be fitted and adapted to the power; I shall therefore superadde.

Rules to direct the *Form* by the *Power*.

Have no collateral Respect, or Sinister Design at thine own honour, advantage, or reputation in thy Professions, and *Forms* of *Godliness*; It is an Argument of a low, and a loose, a mercenary and a disingenuous spirit, for a man to pretend Gods Glory when he intends his own; God will have it all to himself, that no flesh should glory in his presence; we are to lay down our Carnal Excellencies, when we take up a Spiritual Profession. *St. Paul* gloried not in his own Labours, but in the Love of God, *I laboured more then they all, yet not I but the grace of God that is in me; I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me*: much like that Expression when he tells us, that when he doth what he hates, *it is not I, but sin that dwelleth in me*; So that as to his personal condition, when the sum total is cast up as to Grace, and Concupiscence, it amounts but to two Ciphers set one against another, as he doth justly excuse his Infirmities, so he doth modestly refuse the honour due unto his Graces.

Avoid

Avoid all conceited Tones, affected Accents, and Antick Gestures in thy Profession, and *Form of Godliness*; these Ridiculous things are sufficiently confuted by a mimical Derision; for there is a Behaviour becoming Holiness; when we Profess as Saints, we should Act as Men; some move in an higher Sphere, and place Religion in the frequent Repetitions of Jesus Christ, and the holy Spirit of God, when they have lasciviously ingeminated these names, which are onely to be mentioned with Reverence, and Trembling, they think they have witnessed a good Confession; but some are paramount, and vilifie all things that are not a pretence to Revelation, and a Lofty Language, as the *Valentinians*, in *Irenæus*, despised the usual Dialects of other men, using Exotick Idioms, the bold, and boasting phrases of *Barbarians*; such we meet with in the discourses of *Jacob Behman*, and *Van Helmont*; in the inscriptions, and pages of the books of *Quakers*, which they call the bosom of God, the outward openings of inward shuttings, Godded with God, Christed with Christ, beams of approaching glory. These swelling words of vanity are unknown to

the Scripture, and contrary to the simplicity that is in Christ.

Let not the *Form* exceed the *Power*, or be as the *Shadows* of the Evening, Longer then the substances on which they do depend. *Virgil* gives several signs of an approaching night, That then the Toads begin to croak, and crawl about; The Shepherds return home, and the Shadows of the Mountains grow Long. Have we not had these ill Symptoms, that our day is far spent? do not Sectaries meet together in Numbers? Are not some Pastors suspended from executing their Charge? is not the Kingdom of Darkness highly advanced? we may guess it to be Midnight by the Dreams and Illusions, and pretended Visions of some *Enthusiasts*. Our Saviour condemned the Generation of the *Pharisees*, that curtail'd the Law, and made broad their Phylacteries; who when they Fasted, disfigured their faces by distorted Mouths, and pensive Countenances, as if deformity were the *Form of Godliness*. Suffer not the *form* to be of equal Extension with the *power*, because it is apt to Degenerate, and become Excessive. There are some eminent Devotions, that are as the Sun in the Meridian, the Shadows
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are small ; and they enter into a Closet, as a Recess from humane Observations, and there are Humiliations, wherein we are to anoint our Faces, to make them Shine, and when they shine, as *Moses* did, we are to veyl them, though it be by an Irradiation from God. We are instructed to this by the Windows of *Solomons* Temple, that were narrow outwards, but broad within, and Receptive of light, by the Temple it self, that was conspicuous indeed without, but the Guildings and Magnificences were internal, by the Sanctuary that was Veiled, but within were the Altar, and Oracle, the Propitiatory and Mercy-Seat, the Cherubims, and God that dwelt between them ; by the Heavens, whose Appearance to the Earth is an azure Canopy, emboss't with Clouds, and glittering stars, but within there is God, and Jesus the Mediator of a new Covenant, an innumerable Company of Angels, and the Spirits of just men made perfect, that reign with him in immortal, and everlasting Glory.

Let thy *form* keep a constant Tenour in heavy, as well as Halcion dayes ; when *Jerusalem* flourished in the dayes of *Alexander*, the *Samaritans* worshipped at her Temple, and came

to warm themselves at the High Preists fire; but when *Antiochus* had Ransackt the City, and Sacred Treasuries, then they blessed themselves at mount *Gerizim* in the Denyal of the God of Israel: when Christ multiplyed the Loaves he multiplyed his followers, who would have taken him by force and made him King; They thought his Territoryes would be Opulent, his Feilds and Vineyards fertile, that his Jewish Subjects needed not to travel to Egypt in the dayes of Famine, but that his Monarchy would infinitely exceed that of *Solomons* in Peace and Plenty; They thought that the *Roman* Eagles would be gathered as Chickens under his Wings, and that his Gleanings would be better then the Vintage of all the Kingdomes upon Earth; But when he told them, *his Kingdom was not of this World*; that his *Crown must be of Thorns*, how few did bear his reproach to follow him without the Camp? to honour him in the indignities of his passion? What is this but the Artifice of filthy Lucre, to make a Gain of Godliness to assemble for Corn, Wine, and Oyl, to bake Cakes to the Queen of heaven, not to be consumed with famine; to court the Kings Daughter because she is an Inheritrix of
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temporal Blessings, and not for the Beauties of her Holiness; but they that are affraid, or ashamed of the Profession of Godliness before Tyrants, Tribunals, Flames, and Faggots, of them will the Son of Man be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of the Father, with all his holy Angels.

Let thy *Form* have such an inviting Modesty, as to allure others to a Love and Participation of the *Power of Godliness*. Musicians observe in the Sympathy of sounds, that if two Viols be tuned to a Consonancy, and the String of one be struck, the same string of the other will sound, though laid at a Distance; such an Harmony there is of Souls, that if a well-tuned Heart be struck with the Finger of God, it will send forth such a Melody that will work in others, an Unison, and Concord with it self; *David* went up with the Tribes to worship, *Andrew* brought *Simon*, *Philip Nathaniel*, the woman of *Samaria* the City of *Sychar* to the presence of the *Messiah*.

The *Apostles* did triumph in the Myriads of the *Jews*, the Kingdoms of the *Gentiles*, the Numberless Accessions of the World to the little Flock of Christ. A *Form* well ordered in all things

things by a sweet and gracious Conversation, doth powerfully and placidly insinuate it self to produce this Effect; which I shall demonstrate thus. The Word is the great Instrument of Faith; it hath a Moral, and Suasive Power to propound Arguments to the Understanding, and Objects to the Will, *Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* But this Cause is not irresistible, for we find the *Apostle* taking up the Complaint of the *Prophet*, *Who hath believed our report?* But where the Word is deficient, the *Form* of a good Conversation may be Efficient of Faith in *Christ*. St. *Peter* exhorts *Wives* to be in subjection to their own *Husbands*, *that if any obey not the Word, they may without the Word be won, with the conversation of their Wives, while they behold their chastity coupled with fear.* It seems the Eye is a better Organ than the Ear, sometimes to convey Light and Happiness to the Spirit, and good Works are better Orators than good Words; For so we read in Story, that *Theodolinda*, Queen of the *Longobards*, converted both her *Husbands*, the First from *Gentilism*, the other from *Arianism*, an auspicious Lady, to espouse them both to the great Bridegroom of Souls; but the Story

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ry is still Big with greater Wonder, for her Virtues were so Exemplary and Eminent, that they executed an Apostolick Office, and converted the Nation of her Subjects to be baptized into the Catholick Faith.

If thou seest a beauty in the *Form of Godliness*, and wouldst preserve it from decay, avoid the sins mentioned in the Catalogue. The Enemies of a *form*, are those of her own house, no Sins make her more Odious, then those that are Shrowded and Sheltred under her Protection.

All sin hath such an abhorrence to the powers of holiness, that they hate the *Form*, and Fringes of her Garment (as is commonly observed of the Panther, that he so abhors the person of a man, that he tears in pieces his picture) For a *Form* extorts, from Seducers, and Sectaries, those Actions that are against the Bent and Inclination of their hearts; They are Covetous, and yet the false Apostles at *Corinth*, preached freely to get Occasion of Glory, and disgrace *St. Paul*; who was there forced to live by his Mechanick Labours, that he might not be Burdensome, or Chargeable to that Opulent and Censorious City.

They are Self-lovers, in their Benificence and

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Good

Good Will towards men. I need not mention any more, seeing Self-love is so Prolifical a Parent of all the other Sins, that they must have a Commixture and Co-incidence with it, as Branches in the Stem from whence they grow: So that the *Form* is a Restriction to, and Contradiction of their Villanies, though they use it as an Artifice to palliate their sweet and secret Sins, and to make way for an open Dissolution; *The sixth verse calls them Creepers, while they creep into houses unawares, and privily sow their Tares,* and are Despicable; they insinuate themselves with Pretences of Strictness, and a Tender Conscience, of Modesty, and Meekness, of Condescensions, and Philanthropy; but when the Creeping Party becomes prevailing, they soon forget their formal Complements, and break the Bonds of their former Restrictions asunder, and cast away their Cords from them; they are Blasphemers, and fill heaven with Reproaches; Traytors, and fill Kingdoms with Seditions, the Tender Conscience soon betrays it self in Searchedness, and unnatural Affection, is incontinent in all Excesses, and fierce in all Errors, with a Rage reaching up to heaven: how contrary is this to the Light of the Gospel, that is altogether

ther Serene, and Pacifical ; to the Tongues of Fire that descended on the Apostles, that by all-powerfull words did create those Miracles that were all like his that sent the Comforter, the instances of mercy: new light soon turns into Wild-fire, and the Tender Conscience Ravens as a Wolfe, to make havock of the Church; The *Arians*, and *Donatists* of old, and *Anabaptists* in *Munster*, and *Seſtaries* of *England* of late have been sufficient Arguments to make this manifest to all men, and Alarms to Princes whole security consists in the Preservation of Religion ; In this vigilancy *Babylon* exceeded *Zion*, for *Nebuchadnezzar* made a Decree, that *what ever Nation spake against the God of Shadrach, should be made a Dunghill*, but of *Judah* where God was known the Prophet complains, *according to the Number of thy Cities, so are thy Gods O Judah*: to return, An Hypocrite Loves not freely, and heartily his Reigning Sin, because it exerciseth a Tyranny and Co-active Power over him ; it restraines him from swallowing the sweet Morcels he tacitely hungers after, therefore he Dethrones it, and takes away the Scepter of Authority from it, when he can have his other Lords to

Reign over him ; and exposes his *Form* when he hath cast of its Yoak to the greatest Odium and Contempt ; what cheap thoughts must men have of a *Form of Godliness* when it's infected with Dishonesty, the feigned Saint is manifestly a real Knave, and all his Humiliations and Prayers, wherein he deprecates the Evils of Covetousness , are apparently but feigned words to make merchandise of the Inheritance of Orphans, the Houses of Widdowes, the Patrimony of the Church, and the Rights of his Brother ? how infamous must the way of Balaam be in the opinions of men ? who said he would not curse *Israel* for an house-full of Silver and Gold ; crying out, *how good are thy Tents O Jacob, and thy Tabernacles O Israel ; Praying that there might be no Divination against Jacob, or Inchantment against Israel ;* yet all this holy Discourse and heavenly Resolution was but a Varnish to a deceitfull heart that was Brib'd with filthy Lucre, and the Wages of unrighteousness : can a Dogs neck more defecrate an Altar ? or the image of an *Adonis* a Temple ? then for a man to fling out his Invectives against sin, and yet to indulge those that are contributory to his Lust, and Avarice ? what are the Prayers

Prayers of these men but so many Practical Lye told to heaven, who while they pray, with a tacite Blasphemy defie God, and when they sin, by open Atheism deny him, and the Votaries are as certainly the Captives of the Devil, as they are the creatures of God.

Avoid those sins that are inconsistent with a *Form of Godliness*, which may be reduced to a tripartite Division; Some hinder the Assuming of a *Form*, others Blast it, whilst it is Professed; and others do Renounce it, and Cast it off. The sins that hinder the Assuming of a *Form*, are *Prejudice*, and *Fear*.

Prejudice against the Precepts, that command us to cut off the Right hand, which is interpreted the Mutilation of the Body; as Fervency of Spirit is the Calenture of the Soul, the Communicating and Doing good, the Wasting the Estate, and being Evil spoken of for the Name of Christ, the Wounding the Reputation, these are the Grievous Commandments of an Hard Master, to which, in stead of Binding them to mens Fingers, they give them a Manumission; and with the Young man in the Gospel, Go away; and with *Orpah*, salute, and forsake together.

Fear,

Fear, if with *Scylla*, they could see a Crown on the Liver of the Sacrifice, the Wages of Godliness, the Divinations of Riches and Honour; they would become Disciples; but when they Observe all that will live Godly in Christ, must suffer Persecution, and through many Tribulations we must enter into the Kingdom of heaven, they are offended at the Cross of Christ, they think there is a Lyon in the way, that affrightens them from any Essay of walking in them.

These sins hinder men from being Catechumens, but which is worse, some that are Baptized blast their Profession by a Flagitious Life, live without God in the world, that it had been better for them they had never known the Way of Truth. Such are they that think it below a Brave Spirit, to tremble at a Threatning, but stifle the Warnings of their own Bosom, and live in Chambering, and Wantonness, Rage, and Riot, Swearing, and Uncleanness, that a man without the Breach of Charity may say, they have no Faith.

But Apostacy, from Faith, and Obedience, does Obliterate all the Characters of a *Form*, and makes Shipwreck of Profession, and renounceth

nounceth Communion with the Visible Church. There were three sorts of these *Apostates* in the times of St. *Cyprian*; the *Traditores*, that gave their Bibles, in stead of their Bodies, to be burnt; the *Thurificati*, that offered Incense to Idols; and the *Libellatici*, whose Denials of Christ were more Private and Auricular, but bought Tickets from the Magistrates, to preserve them from that Bloody Inquisition. Now an Apostate cannot be an Hypocrite, for he is gone out of the Precincts of the Church; *They went out from us, because they were not of us, saith St. John*, they have broken themselves off from that Body into which they were implanted by Baptism, and are Strangers to the Covenant of Promise: Thus we see the Dignity, and Defection of a *Form*, how it is to be exercised, suspended, and moderated, and how to direct its course between a Rude, and Rigid Zeal, and a loose and Sceptical Profession; we see the Grounds and Gradations of its Dishonours, and Decays, how that it departs from some men as the Glory of the Lord did from the Temple, and Altar, and Threshold of the house, in the Vision of *Ezekiel*: and when the Lease thus falls and withereth, the Tree is Barren, and Corrupt,
for

for that is the Climacterical time to shew its Disease is Mortal, and therefore it must not cumber the Vineyard, but be cut down, or plucked up by the Rootes.

But it is high time for us to come to the *Power of Godliness*, which hath so much Goodness in it, that it should not be accounted an Offence; and so much Wisdom, that it should not be accounted Foolishness; the Necessity of it is so great, that it should not be Delayed, and the Excellency so Glorious, that it should not be Denied: therefore, as all men should acquire it for Salvation, so our Present Duty is to inquire, wherein it Consists, and Discovereth it self.

I have already explained the Phrase, that the Reducing of the Habits, and Vital Principles of Grace into Act, is the *Power of Godliness*; the Philosophy of which Leads us to the Consideration, That Habits of Grace are those Divine Qualities, infused into the Soul by the Spirit of God, which incline the Heart, and sway the Conscience to an actual Obedience, to the Will of God, with Facility, and great Delight. They are therefore called by the Fathers, and Schoolmen, the Springs, and Fountains of Grace, not like

like the Fountain in the midst of Paradise that flows with continual waters, but like the waters of Siloam, that spring from the foot of mount Sion, *qui non jugibus aquis sed certis horis diebusq; ebullit*, whose Streams are not alwayes Current, but in the due seasons of time: The musical knowledge of a Lutanist in his Quavers, Rests, and Motions, whereby he is able on all occasions to play those delightfull *Airs* that commend his skill, is the Habit of the Artist, but suppose the Hand of the Lutanist bewounded, he hath still the knowledge, and Habit of his Faculty, although the Exercise be prevented by the Indisposition of that necessary Instrument of his musick; so the Godly man that hath these principles of a Celestial Original, hath upon all occasions his senses exercised by reason of use, suitable to those commands the law of God requires, and those Emergencies the Providences of God expose him to: and although the Acts of Grace may be suspended sometimes by Natural, or Civil actions, sometimes by inevitable Infirmities, yet still he hath a New Nature, the Unction of the Holy one, and the seed of God abiding in him: for

our clearer understanding of which, we are to consider.

1. The Plenty of *Godliness* consists in the Habits of Graces; The Righteous are said to be *Trees Planted by the Rivers of water*, and *the Trees of the Lord are full of Sappe*. The Radical moysture of these noble Vines may Retire to the Root in Winter, yet at the return of the Sun they send forth their Grapes in Clusters, and their Perfume as the smell of *Lebanon*, as a homage of gratitude to the Influences of Heaven, and the Blessings of God. These are the Gifts of a Liberal God, like those of a Prince in his Inauguration and Festivity, for he sheds abroad the washing of Regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost abundantly upon us; that we may abound in the work of the Lord. And as there is more light in the body of the Sun, then in all the beams that shine on the World; for, suppose they were all Eclipted, the Sun in a moment, or imperceptible time, could supply them all, by one Irradiation; so if the Acts of Grace were all vanished, they would be Renewed by the treasures of their Causes. The Acts of Grace are Transient, but the Habits are Permanent, and Replenish

nish the soul with innumerable Activities, to the Comfort of the Believer, and the Glory of the Giver. This is called, a Living by Faith, therefore acts flow from the Habits of grace, as beams from the Sun, and streams from a fountain, are many, mighty, pleasing, vigorous, and delectable, they are free, frequent, natural, and numberless.

2. *The Power of Godliness*, is the reducing the Habits of Grace into Exercise, and Operation. The same word doth the *Apostle* use to his son *Timothy*, *Be strong in the Grace that is in Jesus Christ; go on from Strength to Strength, till thou appear before God in Sion; shine like the Sun, more and more, till the perfect Day, who from the Twylight of the morning, Runs his Race like a Gyant, till it comes to its meridian brightness.* The Initials of Grace are weak, like an Embryo, infirm as an Infant, but by superadded acts, the Smoaking Flax is kindled into a Flame, and the Bruised Reed becomes a Cedar, the Habits grow in strength, and stature, by the addition of one grace to another, which is the supply of every part extensively, adding to faith virtue; and intensively, by the addition of one degree of Grace unto another, till it

comes to the measure of its stature; when righteousness is revealed from faith to faith; Grace is never commensurate in the beauty of proportion, till it is consummate in the beauty of perfection. They that were divorced from their sins, as *Phaltiel* was from *Michal*, who went weeping after her to *Bahurim*; when this Gift of God is stirred up in them, contemplate holiness with joy; they that did deprecate Wrath with Fear, implore Mercy with Confidence; They that sought after him whom their soul Loved, when, with *Andrew*, they have found the *Messias*, Lean on his bosom, Love him dearly, Esteem him highly, Follow him fully, and Live with him eternally.

The weak in the faith, and the feeble-minded, wrestle not with Principalities, and Powers, but with God himself, give all diligence to make their Calling sure, press forward to the Price of their high Calling, abound in the work of the Lord, till by uncessant Labours, they rest in the Fruition of him; as if we might suppose a spark of Fire unextinguishable, it would be in continual Ascents, till it came to its own Countrey, and Region, under the Concave of the Moon

I. There

1. There is a mighty Tendency and Impulse in Habits to exert themselves into Act, they are the full Breasts of Consolation, that are uneasie till they are Drawn, and Dispenced, they are as seed cast into the Earth, that lives and growes up into an Harvest; They are Talents to be improved, and Lamps to be furnished; and because Flames are soon spent unless God be in the Bush, and Streams soon vanish without an Ocean, it being God that worketh in us both to Will, and to Doe, that giveth Life and Motion to these Qualities of the Soul; we must have still Recourse to the Influences of his Power, and the supplies of his spirit.

2. There is a Gratitude in free and frequent acts to further the Growth, Strength, and Radication of their Habits; as natural Qualities are intended by natural Actions, so are supernatural, as the more a man playes on a Musical Instrument, the greater are the habiliments of his art; So *Hoseab. 6. 3.* Then shall ye know the Lord, if ye follow on to know the Lord; infused knowledge should be increased by a studious meditation; So *Coll. 1. 10.* *Filled with the Knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding,* there is the Infusion of
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the Habit, *That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all well pleasing, being fruitfull in every good work*, there it is reduced to act, *increasing in the knowledge of God*, there is the Radication of it, *For he that will do Gods will shall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God. Job. 17. 7.* they are not Lazy and Languid things, but are discovered by the facility strengthened by the frequency of their own Actions. The habit and the act are thus bound up together in the Bundles of life, combine in Vigor, and Virtue, in Influence, and Causality on one another; and hence it is that an Habit of Grace is a Quality difficultly removed, and although it may be interrupted and suspended by impetuous Temptations, and imperious Lusts, yet in this Hostility and Conflict it is Restless till it is prevalent, and have Dominion, as the Sympathy of a Needle touched with a Load-stone makes it unquiet in its greatest trembling, and disturbance, till it Rests, as in its Center, in a Direct Line poynting at the Polar star; And as in an uneven Ally a Bow! may run one way when the Byass inclines it another, so a Godly Man may be Disturbed by Surreption and Infirmary, though the Habit doth sublimare, and sway the heart to the ser-

service of God : The habits of *Grace* will not be kept in *arctâ custodiâ*, but will break prison, and walk at Liberty.

This Power discovereth itself.

1. In Resisting strong Temptations, to express it in the Allusion of the Apostle, it quits it self like a Man in its spiritual Olympicks, when the messenger of Satan buffeted our Apostle he besought the Lord thrice, the assault of an Enemy excites the valour of a Veteran Souldier, so the urgency and vehemeny of Temptation made him ingeminate his requests to God.

2. In mortifying strong corruptions, dethroning Satan from his strong holds, captivating every Imagination, that towreth against the commands of Christ, destroying every Reigning sin, as *Josuah* did the Kings of *Canaan*.

3. In Acts of eminent Obedience ; A sacrifice can be worth but little, that costs nothing ; *Abel* offered up his Best, *Abraham* was willing to sacrifice his son, *St. Paul* himself, he was ready to be offered ; This *Power* animates and enobles the heart, to hate father, and mother, to
cast

cast away his chiefest Joy, as a snate, to cut off the Right hand, and pull out the Right eye, to fling away the most precious Treasure, as a Torment, at the command of Christ; if a man have Wit and Learning, this divine power is as a spring of Motion to him, to be usefull and profitable in worthy Instances, and Institutions; in meditations on Gods Word, Defence of his Truth, Instruction of his People, and inquiry into those mysteries, that is, the Emulation of Angels to pry into: if a man hath Honour, this Power makes it a Champion for the Patronage, and Lustre of Religion, it humbles him, to fling down his Coronet at the feet of the Lamb, and Advanceth him, because he hath something the world hath an Esteem for, to Deny for his Saviour, which is beyond the Proportions, and possibilities of ordinary Christians: if he hath Riches, this Power turns his Almoner, feeds the Hungry, cloaths the Naked, Erects Hospitals, builds Schools of Learning, and makes his life the definition of the Law of Charity: all his measures in religion are laudable, and transcendent, not onely thrust down, and shaken together, but running over.

But do not these Gloryes of the Power of
God.

Godliness, discourage those that are weak in grace? I answer, that it may be propounded as a Probleme, that the Jew-born Babe hath more strength, then the Old man, the infancy of grace is more powerfull, then the Decrepid Age of an inveterate Lust, as there is more vigour in a few Drops of *Spirits*, then a great quantity of water; so there is in the smallest seed, and sparkle of Godliness, then the greater measures of Corruption: for this seed grows in the midst of all the Tares that would choak it, and this sparkle lives in the midst of all the waters that would extinguish it, and the smoaking Flax, and bruised Reed, break forth into Victory, against all the Winds and Tempests that oppose them: which strange vigour doth not arise from the immortality of any Grace in it self, but from the supplies of that spirit, that is greater, *potentior*, saith *Beza*, stronger in us, then he that is in the world.

I shall conclude all by an instance, how to reduce the Habit of Love, that Powerful, and Operative Grace into act; which when it is once Kindled in the Bosom of a man, he finds his Heart, like the *Disciples* going to *Emaus*, burn in the flames of a most Seraphical Affection. The *Master of the Sentences* denies any habit of Love in the soul, but asserts, that all its Emanations

flow immediately from the Person of the Holy Ghost: but seeing the *Apostle* expressly distinguisheth between the habit of Love, and the Spirit, as between the Effect, and its Cause, when he tells us, *That the Love of God is shed abundantly in our Hearts, by the Holy Ghost*; and the Acts of this Love are Defined to be, *the Fulfilling of the Law, the Bond of Perfection, and the end of the Commandment*, we may reduce this habit into act by *Examples, and Arguments*.

1. By *Argument*, Enter then, O my soul, into those Galleries, wherein the King of Glory Walks, and is Detained; and Observe how he hath commended his Love toward thee, All the Dimensions of his Love, its Height, Length, Depth, and Breadth are so many Topicks to persuade and allure thee, to be Espoused to him, as thy Bridegroom.

The height of this Love is Extasie; that God over all, blessed for ever, equal to the Father, in whom are hid all the Treasures of wisdom, and Knowledge, whom the Angels worship, should have his heart Ravished with a Creature, polluted with Blood, defiled with Sin, subjected to Damnation, that when thou wast upon the Precipice of Ruine, stretched forth his hand to save thee, and draw thee into his Bosom. Canst thou;
 O my

O my soul! forbear to say with the *beloved Disciple*; To him that Loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us Kings, and Priests unto God; To him be glory and dominion, for ever and ever.

The depth of this Love was humility, he humbled himself to assume our nature in the Form of a servant, to bear our miseries, and become obedient to death. *David* and *Jonathan* were a famous pair of Lovers; *Jonathan*, who was heir apparent to the Crown, Knew *David* was designed for it by the Almighty, yet was faithful to him in his secrets, solicitous for him in his Dangers, and gave him his hand to advance him to his own Throne: But the Love of Christ is without a Parallel, That supream power should assume the Form of a Servant, infinite glory should submit to a Reproach, exquisite Purity, should suffer imputed sin, that the Son of God's Complacency should bear the Viols of his Wrath, should descend from heaven, come out of the Bosom of his Father, to enter into a Grave; what greater token of his Love could he give thee, then his Agony, his Blood, his Life? Surely, O my soul, thou art harder then Iron, if this Loadstone will not draw thee. Well might *Solomon* riddle all the Rarities of Nature, to be

Symbols of this Love, to which the whole Creation is not sufficient to be an Allegory. For greater Love then this hath no man, then to Lay down his Life for his friend; but herein he commended his Love to us, that while we were sinners, he died for us. Consider the High Priest of our Profession, hanging on the Altar of his Cross, with his arms stretched wide open to receive thee, and canst thou forbear Leaning on his Breast, and prying into the secrets of his Love, the Knowledge of which passeth Understanding.

The Breadth of this Love is Universality: so immense it is, that it hath mercy for thousands, a Plenteous Redemption, salvation to the uttermost; he tasted death for every man, and Laid down his life for the world. No man ever perished for want of Bounty, or Bowels, the Passion or Compassion of a Saviour, but because his sensual Part is offended at Christs Cross, and commands. Consider then, O my soul! how delectable are his Laws? how glorious his Cross? Obedience is essential to Love, and where it is habitual, there is as much Pleasantness in his Precept, as there is Sweetness in his Promise: if thou prefer profit with *Judas*, pleasure with *Zimri*, honour with *Diotrephes*, an Obliquity before a
Right

Right path, thou dost not only sin against the Precept, but the Grace of God that would assist thee to observe it. Faith looks at a future Retribution, but love immediately at the Merit of the Law-giver and the kindness of his Commands; and if the Amabilities of them, were once presented to thee, it would be as un-easie to thee to be vicious, as it would be to a vicious Person to be Devout; thou wouldst see Liberty in his Yoake, and Lightness in his Burden, it would be as a Wing to a Dove, an help in motion, as Ballast to a ship, an hindrance against fluctuation. As his Commands are Pleasantness, so is his Cross peace, our Saviour to commend his Love to us, consulted not the Dignity of his person, the Tragedy of his Passion, but longed for his Suffrings, thirsted after his Cup, hungred after that Passover, which he was to eat with such bitter herbs. Esteem then O my Soul! but all things as Dross to know the fellowship of his sufferings, which are Seals of thy Adoption, Pledges of Gods paternal Love, and and work an eternal weight of Glory.

The length of this Love is eternity, its ancient Love, from everlasting, he loved us first; its durable to everlasting, he loved us to the

the end ; it is not Critical, or Captious to take offence at every lapse, or Omission. And if it be lawfull to speak of the Duration of God, by the Measures of time ; this Love was as great in the first Moment as it can be to Eternity : for then did the admirable and astonishing Wisdom of the blessed Trinity consult the Salvation of thy Precious Soul ; by the Incarnation, and Passion of the Son of God, when the fallen Angels were left in a State of irrecoverable Perdition : That he that is Glorious in holiness, should be a Sin and a Curse for us by the Projects set up from everlasting, is so stupendious a Depth that unless it had been manifested in the Gospel, had been the highest Blasphemy to imagine it, and what the Wisdom of the three Persons did contrive, the Love of the second did bestow, he loved us, and gave himself for us, Thou must then O my Soul ! either account all this a Golden Dream, or a well devised Fable, or else not suffer the world to be a Rival in thy Estimation, and Affection with the Son of God, if these meditations be seriously beleived, and judiciously weighed, thou canst not Expostulate *what is thy Beloved more than another Beloved, who is the cheifest among*

ten thousand, altogether Lowe, and altogether Lovely.

2. Converſe with divine Objects and Examples. As Flame Kindles Flame, ſo doe examples excite Love, and Objects not only Attract the heart but Ravish and Transform it; if *David* muſes, the fire will burn, if *Moses* be in the mount his face will ſhine; the Butterfly doth adorn her ſelf, and the Bee enrich her ſelf, by dwelling on the Flowers of the feild; if a Ray of Love may ſpring from a Glance, how much more from a Viſion face to face, a full contemplation of the beauty of holineſs? I ſhall conſider but three freinds of the Bridegroom, and their Delicious Intimacies with him; *Mary Magdalen* ſhe loved much, and kiſſed the feet of Chriſt, to acknowledge her ſubjection to him, ſhe waſhed them with her Tears, and wiped them with the Haires of her head: if there w^re virtue in touching the Hemme of his Garment, much more in kiſſing his feet that were ſo Beautifull that his very foot-ſtool was glorious, and the Throne of Grace; *St. John* (we may ſay) kiſſed the hands of Chriſt to acknowledge his Dependance on him, whoſe hand was the great inſtrument of Bounty,
whole

whose Bosom, in which he Lodged, the Treasury of Grace and Cabinet of secrets, where he had the misteries of the Kingdom of Heaven revealed to him; could a man choose a diviner mansion, or inhabite a better Tabernacle? The Spouse kissed the Lipps of Christ to show her Communion with him. Those Lipps that had Grace powred into them, and spake the Words of eternal Life; such Examples will excite the heart to Emulation and make it sick of Love; I will give him then ten thousand Kisses, and embraces, I will serve him, praise him, Trust in him till my love is consummate, by being for ever with the Lord; And then O my Soul, if he should aske thee as he did *Peter, Simon Bar Jonah Lovest thou me?* thou wilt answer as he did, *Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.*

By this instance we are directed to exercise any other Grace of the Gospel.



FINIS.

